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ABSTRACT

The paper discusses the meaning of value and valuing, their roles in evaluation, and the potency of value systems in problem solving logic. Evaluation is defined as a process for facilitating decision making. A decision making situation occurs when there are options which are impossible to treat equivalently, and there is an impact in the selection of one option that extends beyond the choice-making act. The most important motivating force for evaluations is the impact factor. Values and valuing play a significant role in evaluation. Therefore, they are defined and discussed in detail. Value is context determined. Value is the noun form applied to a class of quality; while the verb form, to value, refers to an internal state or exchange action. The evaluation process would be better understood if researchers concentrated on the verb sense to value. Value and value systems determine what we value, how we know what to value, and the logic and process for problem solving. (DWH)

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Phi Delta Kappa

May, 1981

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PREFACE

The Research on Evaluation Program is a Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory project of research, development, testing, and training designed to create new evaluation methodologies for use in education. This document is one of a series of papers and reports produced by program staff, visiting scholars, adjunct scholars, and project collaborators--all members of a cooperative network of colleagues working on the development of new methodologies.

What is the meaning of the concepts "value" and "valuing"? What role do values play in the evaluation process? This paper contains a discussion of these questions as well as a consideration of how value perspectives influence the problem solving logics usable in evaluation.

Nick L. Smith, Editor
Paper and Report Series

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VALUES, VALUING, AND EVALUATION

This paper ends far from the place that was anticipated when the work began. The turn around is largely due to a statement by Gowin and Green (1980) that little if any intelligible sense can be attached to the questions, "What values do our children have? What values should they have?" That statement upset the mental "apple cart". We assume that people have values; that values can be given to and or taken on by people; that values are possessible things or characteristics. Not so. As Gowin and Green state, we do not have values, we value.

That statement flawed the base for what appeared to be a straightforward logical argument.

1. People use their values in determining the relative worth of the different options in a decision.

2. There is confusion about: a) what is meant about the construct "value"; b) what are the things we have when we have values; and c) how those things (our basic values) are used in the evaluation process.

3. The resolution of this confusion (and thus the improvement of evaluation) lies in: a) the examination of the meaning of the construct "value"; b) the determination of where and how value fits into the evaluation process; c) the identification of the basic building blocks that create the things or characteristics we have when we have values; and d) the delineation of strategies by which values may be plugged into evaluation methods.

If we do not <u>have</u> values we cannot use <u>them</u> in weighing decision options.

But, people feel they have values and valuing plays roles in the evaluation process. And there is confusion and mystery about what we mean by value and how we do it. It is also clear that

value systems, interlocking sets of values, materially influence what is valued, how we resolve problems, and how we know that we know something. These items condition our lives and the way we work. Because of that, this paper has three segments: 1) the meaning of value and valuing as seen in word usage; 2) the role(s) of value and valuing in evaluation; and 3) the potency of value systems in our epistemologies and our problem-solving logic. Before attending to those items it seems necessary to define the indirect object of this effort, the evaluation process. Evaluation means many things to many people and thus can be a very complex and abstract entity. By restricting that meaning herein, we hope to reduce the overall abstraction level being focused upon.

Evaluation Defined

As used in this paper, evaluation refers to a process for facilitating decision making. It does not (or at least as focused on here) focus on all instances of decision making. I purchased an automobile not long ago. That purchase was an instance of decision making, and I engaged in some activities that facilitated my choice making. Some would call those activities evaluation. There were a number of options, different makes and models of cars that I considered, and the selection of one of those options was not a trivial choice. That is, the selection of one of those options had an impact on other aspects of my life. In short, I wanted to choose a car that most economically met my transportation needs.

A decision situation enjoins when: a) there are a number of options (at least two); b) it is impossible to treat all the options the same way; and c) there is an impact in the selection of one of the options that extends beyond the choice-making act. Some illustrations are useful. The retention or dismissal of a staff member in which there are at least two options, it is impossible to exercise both, and the selection of one or the

other options has an impact on the life of that staff member, on the persons with whom that staff member works, and on the overall functioning of the organization in which that individual is (or is not) a staff member. The selection of a specific reading instruction program is another illustration. Again, there are numerous options--rote approaches, phonics approaches, or a combined approach. The economics and staff capabilities, and the nature of the options themselves make it impossible to select all three options. And the decision will have impact on the children who will experience the instruction, the staff who must do the instruction, and on the organization in which the instruction takes place; it will be perceived as effective or ineffective by its publics.

The impact factor in decision making is the important motivating force for doing evaluations. Some choice situations involve options that are relatively impotent. That is, there is little if any long term effect in the selection of option A over options B, C, D . . . . For example, there are two different routes I can drive from my home to the supermarket. They are about the same length, take about the same time, involve about the same traffic density. But on any given trip I must make a choice. Since there is little difference in the effects of driving one route or the other, evaluation is not needed. I pick a route and get to the store. Other decision situations involve potent options. The retention/dismissal decision related to an individual staff member is illustrative. The dismissal option markedly affects the life of that staff member and the organization. The decision to retain is equally potent, although it is not normally conceived that way. The choice of keeping teacher X on our staff maintains that teacher's life style and self perception and conditions the quality of the interaction a given set of students will have.

High potency decision options provide two reasons for careful systematic evaluation activity: the decision maker's peace of mind and documentation in cases in which a decision is challenged. Again the retention/dismissal decision is

illustrative. If I am an administrator responsible for the choice of retaining or dismissing teacher X, I want the peace of mind that comes from knowing that I've made the best possible decision for all the people involved. I don't want to feel that the choice was a capricious one or one made by default. If my decision is challenged I want to be able to document the basis for the decision. This requires that I be able to show the existence of a decision logic that guided my determining the relative worth of the options AND the data of the particular instance that informed the decision. A decision challenge is not an instance calling for proof that the right option was selected, but rather, that a logical and informed choice was made.

Evaluation then is a systematic process used to facilitate choice or decision making. It occurs (or should occur) when two or more options are considered and when the selection of one of those options has impact on the people in the decision situation. The components of the evaluation process should help the decision maker: a) reach clarity on the nature of the different options in the decision; b) identify the dimensions of value for the particular set of options; and c) determine the relative worth or value of the individual options. Evaluations, as Gowin and Green (1978) state, produce "value claims". Something is a good, is good for, or is better than. Along with these value claims, evaluation should present the logic used in arriving at the specific value claims and the data or evidence on which the evaluator(s) reached the value claims presented in the evaluation report.

Toward a Definition of Value and Valuing

Value and valuing is the heart of evaluation. That heart, that core has been largely unrealized in the formulations of the evaluation process over the past several decades. Most of our attempts to explain the evaluation process have been based on a search for "truth" not for value. The need for a shift was

recognized but not fully understood by the National Committee for the Study of Evaluation when it claimed in the frontspiece of its report to the profession, "The purpose of evaluation is to improve not to prove." And in its discourse on "evaluation's illness",

> Most evaluators agree that mere collection of data does not constitute evaluation--there is always a need to make judgments about the data in terms of some implicit or explicit value structure. (Stufflebeam, et al., 1971)

That the search for understanding of the evaluation process has not enjoyed major success can be traced to 1) our lack of understanding of value and valuing, and 2) our assumption that in our evaluative work we seek truth, we seek objectively based information that specifies the option to pick in a decision situation, and (we have hoped) that our work would say that that option is the correct one to pick in other places and at other times.

It is interestingly curious that a term that is so central to the construct and process of evaluation, value, has been discussed so little in the mushrooming literature on evaluation. It is also interesting that value and valuing are simultaneously very simple and very complex. All of us value; much of the time, and with little effort and fuss. We value freedom, the beauty of a sunset, knowledge. We value people (some people at least), relationships, and things. And, we have little difficulty with that valuing. At the same time we find the idea of value to be complex, abstract, and elusive; something that is often a source of confusion in our efforts to understand and carry out the evaluation process.

What Is the Problem?

What is value? (Note the focus here is on value not on a or some value.) What are the characteristics that make something value? What is a value structure? What are the basic building blocks of a "value structure" or value system? Until these

confusions are eased our evaluation efforts suffer for wanting a solid base. What <u>is</u> the role of value and valuing in evaluation?

Another difficulty from our inability to comprehend the construct (and/or the reality of) value is that:

> . . . no adequate methodology exists for the determination of values, even though such a determination may constitute the most professional task the evaluator performs. It may, indeed, be his chief claim to a professional rather than at technical role. (Stufflebeam, et al., p. 18)

This statement assumes that value and valuing play a central role in evaluation. Arguments supporting that assumption will be presented in this discourse. The major points in those arguments are:

1. Research and evaluation are different but related processes that are used by people to serve different but related purposes. Sometimes this use is systematic, at other times the use has quite an accidental structure. We are primarily concerned here with those instances in which evaluation is used purposively and systematically.

2. The purposes served by research and evaluation are different. If this statement were not true, if research and evaluation serve the same purpose, there would be no reason to differentiate between them. If research serves purpose Y and evaluation serves purpose Y, either process is substitutable for the other. If we say, "They serve the same purpose, but differently, one more effectively than the other in this or that way," we are affirming and characterizing their differences. If we say, "They serve the same purpose but in different ways," we make the same point; they serve discernibly different purposes. The need to understand those purpose differences is important for the full understanding of the research and evaluation processes.

3. Both the evaluation and research processes are aids to knowing. In this respect they display great, and often times confusing, similarity. The researcher and the evaluator are driven by the need to know. This is not a negation of purpose differences. Rather it is a recognition that they are analogous

to different sex siblings in family relations. A brother and sister are both children in a family and in that sense alike. Their maleness and femaleness are their difference. Research and evaluation can be conceived of as siblings of the scientific method; they are of the same family. But in serving different purposes they are like a brother and sister, they are different units in that family.

4. The need for standards in evaluation has long been accepted. Tyler's work and Povus' extension of it in Discrepancy Evaluation are the most direct statements of the need for and role of standards in evaluation. Other writers, although perhaps less directly, accept the need for standards in evaluation. For example, the evaluation model developed by Alkin at the UCLA Center for the Study of Evaluation (CSE) includes an evaluation process component called Needs Assessment. "What is the educative need toward which the thing being evaluated is oriented?" is a setting of a standard to be attained. the CIPP model (Context, Inputs, Process, Product) developed out of the work of Stufflebeam has a component called Context Evaluation. This is activity designed to help decision makers identify and choose goals for the system. The selection of a goal to be accomplished by the system being evaluated is, again, a selection of a standard with which to determine quality of the work of that system.

5. Standards, often elusive, are found in and evolve from values. Tyler, when asked where the evaluator should turn to find useful standards, is reported to have said from "your screen of a philosophy and a psychology". To set a goal or to delineate a need is to at least determine the boundaries of valuing that provide the basis for standard identification and specification. Given these points, the lack of understanding of the constructs "value" and "valuing" and the "lack of adequate methodology for the determination of values" (Stufflebeam, et al., 1971) is terribly debilitating. If we do not have a clear understanding of a crucial item in our efforts and if we lack adequate methods for specifying instances of that critical item, we are in an

activity that, at the very best, has a questionable base. Therefore, the development of our understanding of the referents of the terms value and valuing are crucial to furtherance of evaluative work.

A second reason for seeking clarity in our conceptualizations lies in the relationships between axiology (the study of the basic value building blocks in cultures), epistemology (how we know that we know), and the logic of problem solving (the assumptions in our efforts to resolve problems). If X and Y are determiners of value in a culture, <u>if they condition all else</u>, they would condition the way people in that culture know that they know something and how those people resolve problems. This appears unidirectional: basic value building blocks condition how we know, which in turn conditions problem-solving logic. But it doesn't work that way. What we value and how we value affects how we know, <u>and</u> how we know affects what and how we value. Given a culture in which value is based on having or attaining objects (a person-object relationship) objectivity in knowing is revered. At the same time items that cannot be neatly categorized and objectively counted are unknowable and thus of lesser value. This interaction has a synergy that amplifies both parts. The valuing enhances our epistemology and our epistemology supports our valuing. In so doing we become more and more comfortable with and value our way of knowing and our way of knowing becomes more potent in our efforts to accord things, characteristics, or activities as value. As a result, we strengthen the limit on what we know through the limits of our epistemology. To expand our knowledge of the evaluation process then, we need to expand our understanding of value and valuing, and how they interact with knowing and problem-solving logic and how they impinge on evaluation.

The early experiences in evaluation of Title I projects under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 are a beautiful illustration here. The dominate culture (at least the culture of the people who made decisions about the nature of and the funding or not funding of Title I projects) has a

person-object relationship as the basis of the value system. The highest value lies in the object or in the acquisition of the object (Nichols, 1976). A value system with such a base supports and flourishes under a cognitive epistemology. If having or acquiring objects is the highest value, knowing about the effects of Title I projects comes from identifying the things those projects help learners acquire. This is the way to know whether a given project should be continued, modified, or aborted. Those things need to be classified, counted and measured. (And if several of us can get the same number, we'll know that we know!) In the first round of Title I projects, standardized tests were the criterion over and over, and many of the projects showed (by the numbers) that no significant differences were observed. The decision was reached in many of those instances to drop or drastically change the Title I effort. The numbers were convincing to the decision makers. In a goodly number of those sites the people were upset about the conclusion that was reached. These people felt that important things were happening in those programs. Their epistemology was affective. They knew that the program that had been conducted was important. They felt good about what was happening to and with children in their program and were upset when the program was changed. The decisions were made on cognitive epistemology assumptions.

Most of the people in evaluation roles, and those who have contributed to our literature on the evaluation process, have been raised intellectually in a cognitive epistemology. We've been impressed with the work of measurement specialists, statisticians, psychologists, and people from "the hard sciences". Over time we've accepted that to know something we must be able to measure it, to objectify it. We have the further assumption that if we do our evaluation well, we will be able to give our client a definitive statement about the different options in the decision toward which our evaluation effort is oriented. We seek or at least we think we should seek generalizability, a quality that is elusive if objectification is not engaged in.

When asked to do an evaluation, an individual is in effect told that on X date a choice will be made among two or more options and that the person who must make the choice would like some help in knowing the relative worth of the different options. Worth or value is not a constant. The value a decision maker will accord to X will differ from person to person and for the same person at different times. That fact causes havoc with an evaluator's assumption that his or her task is to determine THE worth, the definitive statement of the worth of each option being considered.

The problem here can be demonstrated by using watercolor painting metaphorically. Because watercolor is a devilishly difficult painting medium to control, very few watercolorists strive for photo realism in their work. Instead they work on the idea of "letting the viewer complete the picture". A watercolorist cannot go over and over and over a portion of a composition without creating a muddy looking mess. So, the watercolorist tries to distill the object being rendered to its simplest basic elements, to present those elements, and let the viewer's mind fill in the missing detail.

This difficulty in watercolor painting and its solution becomes a plus; it creates an expanded number of viewers for whom the rendering seems "just right". Visual perception of an object has considerable variability. If several of us were able to perfectly render what we saw when we looked at a pine tree by the side of a road, there would be considerable variation in our products. So, if I want and am able to produce a detailed picture of a pine tree, it will look accurate for those who share my visual perception and inaccurate for others. On the other hand if I can distill pine tree to its essential dimensions (general shape, how the trunk attacks the ground, general pattern of branches, etc.) and <u>suggest</u> them, my viewers will complete the picture in their "mind's eye", accurate to each of them as a picture of pine tree.

Value is every bit as variable as visual perception. In fact, how we visualize things is a part of valuing. If, as an

evaluator, I believe it is my task to determine and display THE definitive statement of the worth of options A, B, C, and D, I am fooling myself. My statement of the worth of those options will be "right" for people who value the same way I do and not for others.

In such a situation I would be of greater help to the decision maker to identify the dimensions of value generally applied to items represented in options A, B, C, and D, and suggest them to the decision maker(s). If I also provide the decision maker(s) with suggestions of how different people use that set of dimensions to reach value judgments, I will probably be of greater help to the decision maker than if I try to present THE value of A, B, C, and D.

Our lack of understanding of the concepts of value and valuing is problematic to evaluators. We do not clearly understand what value is or how valuing occurs. We lack adequate methods for identifying values that are the underlying base for selection of standards useful in a given evaluation. We are unclear about the relationship between value and valuing and our epistemology. And, we structure our evaluative work (and reporting) on an assumption of constancy of value that does not exist in practice. The remainder of this manuscript is focused on the nature and dimensions of value and valuing; on their role in the evaluation process; on the basic building blocks of value systems and their impact on knowing and problem solving logic. Together these items should expand our understanding of and ability to conduct evaluation.

Toward a Definition from Word Usage

The simultaneous simplicity and complexity of the terms "value" and "valuing" are readily apparent in the way they are used; sometimes as a noun and other times as a verb. In its noun use, two different senses exist. Sometimes the term "value" references a category of things. At other times the noun use seems to imply that value is a thing or quality in and of

itself. In normal discourse we flip from one of these noun uses to the other and to the verb use without discerning any difference in meaning. This sloppy use of language deters our understanding of the value and valuing constructs. And, it confuses us regarding its role(s) in evaluation.

In the reading and discussion done in preparation for this paper the following terms have been encountered:

> conventional values, modern values, intrinsic value, extrinsic value, exchange value, older value, absolute value, stable values, relative value, psychological values, cultural values, social values, fundamental value, lasting value, market value, value judgment.

These terms seem to imply that value is a category of things or qualities that could be identified. This use is the one that Gowin and Green (1980) were focused on in their discussion of the questions, "What values do our students have?" "What values should they have?" At the same time the use of so many adjectives indicates that the category referenced by the term value has many subdivisions or subcategories, sometimes discrete and other times interlocking. For example, "older values" and "modern values" would suggest different items, while "conventional values" and "stable values" would seem to reference or incorporate some of the same items. This use of the term "value" as a category is problematic in two ways. We lack inclusion/exclusion rules that would help us understand what is and is not included within the category of things or qualities we reference by the term. And, if the "value" category has subcategories, we lack a clear logic that defines the subcategories and their interlocking relationships.

The second noun use of the term as a thing or quality is seen in the many things we call a value. For example, health is at times and by some thought and spoken of as a value. Happiness, freedom, justice, and education are at times suggested as values. There is confusion here in our inconsistency. Sometimes we act as if health is important and engage in behaviors that would maximize health: we have periodic physicals; we take

vitamins; we get sufficient rest; etc. At other times we disregard health by engaging in activities that reduce (or at least have the potential for reducing) our health: we drive ourselves to fatigue; we disregard the advice of our doctors; we consume too much food, alcohol, tobacco, and/or drugs, etc. The same inconsistency can be seen in other things we call "values". Our actions sometimes document that happiness is important and that at other times it isn't. Ditto for freedom. Sometimes we take actions that would maximize freedom; at other times our behavior belies the importance of freedom. Such inconsistency makes understanding of the term "value" difficult. At one instance we can point to something and say, "That is a value," and at another time it isn't.

In the examination of these terms several points have been observed that do contribute to understanding of the constructs of value and valuing. First, these terms are nouns. As such, they categorize, they reference a class of things. They are labels for a category or class of things that people want to reference in their thinking or communication. The thing or things being referenced in this noun usage are generally abstractions. That is, they usually are metaphysical in nature, something that can be sensed, not something we can hold in our hands. It is clear that there are degrees of abstraction inherent in these terms. Fundamental value, for example, can reference things that are both abstract and specific. In its abstract sense it incorporates the idea of all inclusiveness. In its specific sense it seems to communicate the idea of <u>the</u> one, <u>the</u> basic value.

The second observation that has evolved from the encounter with these nouns is their service as a shorthand mechanism. In writing and discussion we want to focus the thinking of our readers or our listeners on some particular set of things when we use terms such as intrinsic values, relative values, social values, fundamental values, etc. We make statements such as, "It is agreed by most that schools should be concerned about the fundamental values." We seldom elaborate what we subsume with

that term and we proceed as if the writer and reader or speaker and listener have a common mental focus.

A third observation: Sometimes the context in which these value labels are used makes it clear that the speaker or writer has a specific in mind. That is, he or she seems focused on an identifiable item, to know the dimensions of it, and to want the audience to mentally converge on it. At other times the context makes it clear that the value, as a noun, is a "fuzzy", a term used by a writer or speaker that has whatever meaning a reader or listener wants. "Fuzzies" are the art of campaigning politicians. On the political stump the politician will, in loud and confident voice, say, "We will restore the basic values of this, our beloved country." Each listener knows what will be restored. And none of the listeners know.

The development of a definitive statement about the meaning of value is complicated by these variations in its noun or category label usage. Evaluators need to comprehend that variability, to understand the abstractness of it, and to strive for greater precision in use.

Value, as a term, has become an instance of jargon to evaluators. That can be good, bad, or both. Jargon is terminology that has precise and specialized meaning to people who share a special activity and have equal or nearly equal expertise in that activity. Jargon can be meaningless gibberish when used in communication among people who do not have that specialty and expertise. The growing recognition of the centrality of the construct "value" in the process of evaluation suggests two things for evaluators. We need to achieve precision and clarity on what we reference by the term value. And, we need to communicate what that precise meaning is when we speak with evaluation's publics. Neither of these tasks is simple. But, the opportunity to attack them is before us.

The reading and discussions for this paper suggest another dimension of the term value. Earlier a note was made that the focus here was on value, not on a or some value. In some of the discussions, value is used to indicate a quality, virtue, or

characteristic of something or someone. We say "Honesty is a value," or "Parsimony is a value," or "Knowledge is a value." In this use we seem to be saying that value is a general category AND that that category has subdivisions that are identifiable qualities. This is analogous to saying that "car" is a category and that "compacts", "subcompacts", and "sportsters" are sub-divisions. We gain some understanding of the term value as a category label by identification of its subdivisions. But, care is needed. Honesty is a value in some instances and not in others. Parsimony is a value in some instances and not in others.

This recognition in effect says that value is context based; that its nature and quality are always determined in a setting. And, that recognition calls to mind problems encountered relative to the terms "absolute value", "inherent value", and "fundamental value". Each of these suggest that there is or ought to be some irreducible amount or quality that we could identify. Although this is conceptually useful. In practice it is not very helpful. Value is established in the mind and in the interactions of minds. It is maintained in the mind and in actions. And, it is changed in the mind and interactions of minds. Gold is an element that has value, not because of some intrinsic character, but because of mind sets about it, about its color, its tensile strength, malleability, etc. If its color is what someone wants or needs, gold has value in that setting. If its tensile strength meets someone's need, gold has value in that need. In some instances gold has symbolic value. It represents something important to people. In this sense it has value created in and by the mind and mental interactions. If those context and mental items are subtracted or somehow negated, all we can say is that gold is a metal with a specific atomic weight, color, tensile strength, etc. These are not value statements. Rather, they are descriptors that establish what gold is. Evaluators need to know that value is context determined. That knowledge will help condition the manner in which the construct can be used in evaluation.

The literature on value and evaluation displays another use, that use as the verb "to value". "I value truth." "He values participation." Such use is not an indication that truth or participation, or whatever, is intrinsically a value. Rather it is a statement about the condition of thought or action of an individual or group. My statement that I value truth can mean that I care about truth or that I take some action about it or both. The I-care-about sense requires no overt action; I can have strong feelings but appear to do nothing about the item cared for. Valuing in this sense is affective. I have an internal feeling about something or someone, a feeling that can be experienced in varying intensity. I care a lot, some, a little.

In its use as verb, value at times has a substitution or exchange rate sense. In valuing X, I will give a specific amount of money (or other resources, time, or energy) to get X. Because I valued education I exchanged a number of years of possible earnings for an education.

Evaluators should find the verb sense of the value construct useful. It suggests the following: 1) the identification of the thing valued; 2) the determination of the entity or entities that will be an acceptable exchange; 3) the quantification of the items in 1) and 2); and 4) the context in which the exchange will be made, given the quantifications observed.

The effort to understand the constructs of value and valuing through the literature seems enhanced by the recognition of a number of items that might be classified as dimensions of value and valuing. They are:

1) <u>The locus of valuing</u>. Valuing occurs in the minds of individuals and/or groups and is displayed in the actions of those individuals and groups.

2) <u>The nature of the valued item</u>. Sometimes the thing valued is a physical item: a metal, a car, etc. At other times the valued item is metaphysical, as in I value love or freedom. At still other times it is a combination of the physical and metaphysical, as in "We value schooling."

3) The character of the valuing act. Some instances of valuing are internal affective states (The I-care-for discussion presented above). At other times my valuing exists in my willingness to exchange or in the act of exchanging.

4) The intensity of the valuing. As indicated earlier, the valuing of items is a variable. Sometimes the value of an item is extensive; at other times it is not. That intensity variation can be seen in the comparison between valuing of an object by two different people. At other times the value intensity variability occurs between two items in a class or category. I would exchange more for program A than I would for program B. And finally, the variability may occur when possession of more than one item is considered. For transportation purposes alone, I determine the value an automobile has for me. The value of a second automobile (again for transportation alone) will not be as great.

5) The valence of the valuing. In most discussion value is assumed to be positive, the valued item is worth X amount. However, the possibility of a negative value must be considered. The positive or negative valence is demonstrated when I say, "I would pay $10,000 for X," or, "You would have to pay me a $1,000 to get me to do X!"

6) The generalizability of the valuing. The discussion above asserted that value and valuing is context bound. But, this too is a variable. Sometimes the value of something is idiosyncratic to a particular setting. At other times there is commonality across a number of settings. Building on work by Scriven, Lincoln, and Guba (1980) have discussed merit and worth as forms of valuing; merit, in their discussion, being relatively context free and worth being determined totally in the specific setting.

In summarizing the meaning of the constructs value and valuing, the following points need to be made: Value and valuing are complex, abstract, and variable constructs. The noun form, value, is the label we apply to a class of qualities or things. The verb form, to value, references either an internal state or an exchange action we engage in. The concept of absolute value is useful conceptually. But, in real world instances valuing is context based. Valuing is initiated, maintained, and changed in the minds of humans. And finally, valuing seems to have the

following dimensions: locus of the valuing, nature of the item valued, character of the valuing act, intensity, valence, and generalizability. Evaluators who want enhanced understanding of the role of value and valuing in evaluation should expand their understanding of the meaning of value and valuing. The items above suggest avenues for that expansion.

Role of Value and Valuing in Evaluation

The section above was deliberately labeled "Toward a Definition of Value and Valuing". The meaning of complex terms is dynamic and our understanding of them is never complete. Rather, we continually extend our understanding by aprehending new components of meaning and integrating them into the composit already stored in society's knowledge banks. For evaluators one of the productive ways of expanding understanding of the value and valuing constructs is to examine the role they play in the evaluation process.

This moves us dangerously close to circular reasoning. At the very start of this paper it was argued that to improve application of the evaluation process we need understanding of the concepts of value and valuing. Now it is suggested that to know the meaning of value and valuing we should look to the evaluation process. The focus here is not totally on the evaluation process but rather on the role of value and valuing in evaluation. The examination of that role provides us (a la Polanyi) with at least tacit or tangential meaning of the value and valuing constructs.

It is generally agreed that evaluation is a systematic problem solving process. There is continuing debate as to whether evaluation is a subform of research or a subform of the scientific method. One side of this debate proposes an equivalence between the terms research and the scientific method. People on that side display a Venn diagram that is a circle labeled as research or as the scientific method. Then they draw circles totally within the larger circle. One of these

smaller circles they label evaluation. Those on the other side of this debate start with a large circle labeled the scientific method. Within that large circle these people draw at least two smaller overlapping circles which they label research and evaluation.

The resolution of this argument is not a prequisite for a discussion of the role of value and values in evaluation. Regardless of whether evaluation is a subset of the scientific method or of research, evaluation is subsumed by the construct, the scientific method. In either case the general characteristics of the scientific method are found in evaluation. That is, every component of the scientific method will have a comparable component in the evaluation process.

Philosophers of science, in defining the scientific method as the general description of the process for systematic problem solving, generally agree that a vital component, perhaps the most important component, is the existence of a problem. From these discussions it is clear that a "problem" exists when we have an intention of some sort that we wish to realize and something or things are blocking our realization of that intent (McDowell, 1966). If the evaluation process is either a direct derivative of the scientific method or a derivative of research, we should expect the evaluation process to contain a problem component.

The discussions of the National Symposium for Professors of Educational Research (NSPER) 1972 developed a set of problem definitions using McDowell's intent/barrier format. They did this by discussion which concentrated on different types or classes of intents attended to by the scientific method. Included in these classes was the intent to systematically make a choice. Their discussion assumed that this intent exists when:

1) Two or more possibilities or options exist. (They may be different actions that might be taken: e.g., to pick this textbook and not those; to retain or dismiss a worker; to change an activity or not; to label a particular student's work as of B quality and not A, C, D, or E.)

2) The nature of the options and/or the constraints in the context make it impossible to treat all the possibilities identically. (Dismissal and retention cannot be exercized for the same person; there isn't enough money to buy all the different reading texts, etc.)

3) A choice among the options must be exercized by some target date.

This intent to choose becomes (or is) problematic when there is a barrier, a condition that keeps us from carrying out the intent. The lack of information that would differentiate between the options is such a barrier.

There is one more facet to problematic choice making: the impact of the choice. All of us find ourselves in choice making situations in which we do not have a clear picture of the relative worth of all the options. Should we or should we not engage in systematic procedures (evaluation) to help us make our choice? The answer to that question is found in another: What is the impact of the choice? If I make a bad choice, where do the chips fall? Will the results of a bad choice be felt primarily by me? Or, will those negatives unload on others? Some choice situations are instances in which I have the authority and responsibility for choices that are mine. In others I have the authority and responsibility for making a choice BUT I do so "in trust for others". When a decision maker chooses a reading program he or she does it in trust for the teachers and students. If the choice was not the best one that could be made, this negative impact is felt by the people not directly involved in the choosing. The decision maker needs a systematic evaluation in those instances for two reasons: his or her own peace of mind that the best possible choice was made; and, as documentation, that the decision was a thoroughly informed, rational choice; documentation to be used if and when explanation or justification is demanded.

An evaluation is undertaken to "inform the choice" when a problematic decision situation exists. Stripped to its bare essentials, that evaluation involves: careful description of the

options that will be considered; the delineation of the indicators of worth or value of all of the possible options; and, accumulation and interpretation of the relative value of the options.

The report of such an effort contains value claims, in contrast to truth claims. Gowin and Millman (1978) describe five types of value claims:

1) The intrinsic value claim. (X is good.)

2) The instrumental value claim. (X is good to do Y.)

3) The comparative value claim. (X is better than Y.)

4) The decision claim. (X should be chosen over Y and Z.)

5) The idealization claim. (X could be better.)

The report of an evaluation will have value claims from one or more of these categories AND should present the logic, the procedures, and the evidence that supports those value claims.

Value and valuing have a role in this process that is manifest in several ways. First, evaluation can be conceived of as preparation for valuing. That is, it produces the basis, the information for exchanging one thing for another. For example, the decision to buy textbook series A is an instance of valuing. We are saying we are willing to give a sum of money in exchange for those textbooks. The advice to choose textbook A over B, C, and D is an instance of valuing that Gowin and Millman would see as supported by value claims.

The first three of the Gowin-Millman claims are instances of the role of value and valuing <u>in</u> evaluation: the intrinsic, the instrumental, and the comparative value claims. Here the focus is on the options in the choice. Valuing here helps us say that each option is (or is not) good, is good for something, and is better or worse than the other options being considered. Their fourth type shifts in role. Their "decision claim" focuses more on the choice itself than on the individual options. The idealization claim, number five, is another role shift. Valuing

in it plays a role in projecting what might be, that is in projecting some future state.

The second manifestation of the role of valuing in evaluation is in the selection of evidence to be generated in an evaluation. The dimensions of value in general and the dimensions of value for the specific options being considered inform evaluation planning. They provide the basis for the variables and the standards on those variables to be used in generating the data and converting that data into information supportive of the value claims in the evaluation report.

It should be noted that we are not expressing concern here for the value of evaluation. As stated before, we take that on as a matter of faith (with a little help from our philosopher friends). Rather, our concern here is for the part valuing plays <u>in</u> evaluation. The idea of making value claims and producing evidence and logic that supports those value claims in a particular evaluation suggests that valuing plays a pervasive role in evaluation. As Krathwohl (1980) has said,

> Not all such choices (made by scientists in planning and conducting their work) are automatically and completely determined by the logic of the "scientific method". They involve judgment, judgments such as what is important and what is not, what shall be studied, what shall be observed, what corrected or controlled for, . . . (p.37)

Valuing play a role in the decisions to do an evaluation, in the planning of an evaluation, in the conduct of that evaluation, and in our use of those results. Clearly, understanding <u>what</u> value and valuing are is a conditioner of the nature and quality of our work.

<u>The Building Blocks of Evaluation Systems</u>

What is valued by individuals and groups plays a pervasive role in the nature of society, its institutions, the nature and quality of life, and the ways people interact with each other and with their universe. This point is a summary of over a decade of

work by Edwin J. Nichols of the National Institute of Health, a synthesis of work on axiology (the study of the building blocks of value systems), epistemology (how we know that we know), and the logic and process of problem solving in a society. Nichols has constructed a matrix that presents his synthesis. The matrix is a powerful vehicle for organizing thinking about value systems their impact on our ways of knowing, and solving problems. It is a vehicle for expanding our perceptions, our thinking about how we live and work and the bases on which our value systems support and condition our choices.

Before discussing Nichols' synthesis a word is needed about "value systems". To this point the discussion has focused on individual instances of value and valuing. It has not dealt with a composite of values, the nature of a composite of values, or how such a composite impacts on us. Scriven (1966), in an almost poetic statement, says,

> The system of man's values is a net and not a knotted string. It is a web that stretches across our lives and actions and connects them with the thread of reason. It may be true that the net only ties holes together, but it still has to have some points of attachment. The rational tension in the cords often makes it necessary to adjust these points of attachment, as we would make new connections or the old holding points move around, but this internal tension is not self supporting. There must be points of attachment, and they should be secure ones. No point of attachment is immune from these adjustments; so there are no ultimate values, in the sense of unquestionable or indefensible ones. But certainly some values are more important than others, that is more numerous threads run from them. A child begins with certain wants and these get modified by his environment; he learns to think, he acquires new tastes, and these changes lead to self modification. Eventually all his values are either new or have new importance. But they sprang from the interaction of rationality (or irrationality) with his original values and his environmental constraints. If human beings are very different in their infant needs or very different in the constraints which are brought to bear on them, they could well have wholly different later values. Reason bears on and changes values but does not create them ex nihilo. If this is a basis for saying there are limits to its powers, then we can say that. But the picture of ultimate values, from which all others hang like onions on a string is completely wrong. (pp. 48-49)

In this passage Scriven recognizes that values exist in connected systems, that they provide structure to life, that they are formed out of basic needs and constraints, and the rational powers of the individual. He asserts that there are no ultimate values and at the same time recognizes the existence of forces that structure the development of and maintain the more important values.

Nichols (1976) says that the forces that provide the structure (he calls those forces the basic building blocks of values) are cultural heritages. His study of three ethnic groups identifies three basic value building blocks. In the Euro-American heritage he sees that "The highest value lies in the Object or in the acquisition of the Object" (a Man-Object relationship as the value building block). In the Afro-American heritage "The highest value lies in the interpersonal relationship between men" (a Man-Man relationship as the value building block). And, in the Asian-American heritage "The highest value lies in the cohesiveness of the group" (a Man-Group relationship as the value building block). His presentation recognizes that these cultural heritages do not exist in pure form. But the strength of the heritages and the potency of the three building blocks is of sufficient force that they impact heavily on the nature and quality of life, on our epistemologies, and the ways we resolve problems.

In a culture with a value system built on a Man-Object relationship emphasis is placed on things and and their acquisition. Such a value system places a premium on categorization and quantification. The individual values the acquisition and possession of things. The family crest signified the nobility, the important people of Europe. Why were the nobility important? They had land. The migrants to the New World had as part of the motive for their long voyage, the desire to have a place (land) in which they could fashion their lives as they wished. In a culture that reveres objects, it is not at all surprising that the predominant epistemology is cognitive. One knows through counting and measuring. Objectification is

supreme. The oft quoted statement, "If it exists, it can be measured. If it cannot be measured, there is a high probability that it does not exist," is a natural outgrowth of a culture in which value is based on the acquisition of objects. An abundance of items can be cited that fit with this Man-Object based value system. Adoption of a child until just recently was based on the existence of a stable marriage. We could not conceive how one adult could acquire the necessities of the life good to live. At the close of our wars with Indians we effected treaties with them that gave the Indians land. Those treaties were unilaterally abrogated when gold was discovered. The Indian had difficulty understanding this instance of the Man-Object value building block. In a TV documentary, "Hunger in America", it was shown that in some counties the powers that be refused to participate in the Great Society's Food Stamp Program despite the fact that people in those counties were grossly undernourished and dying of starvation. Their reason: fear that the program would upset the economic system of their county.

In a society in which person-person relationships are the basic value building block, it is no surprise that the epistemology is affective. As Nichols says, "One knows through symbolic imagery and rhythm." The Facists went down to defeat in World War II in jungles of Africa not, according to some analysts, because of inferiority of troups and equipment, but rather because their cryptographers could not break the drum code used by Africans to communicate. The reason? The drum code is not a categorizing-count-and measure code. It is a feeling, an affective code. The sometimes derogatory reference that Blacks "really have rhythm" has cultural basis. Blacks seem to feel the music and dance. Whites learn patterns of footwork and count out their movements, often displaying inability to match the count in their heads with the count of the music.

The Asian-American heritage with a person-group cohesiveness underlying the value system has an epistemology that is conative. "One knows through striving toward transcendence," says Nichols. The Japanese symbol for crisis has two

WORLD PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION AND ASSOCIATION OF PSYCHIATRISTS IN NIGERIA -- UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

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BEHAVIOURAL OBJECTIVE: In the last few years it has become increasingly clear that there are differences between people that account for their behaviour and thought processes. My contention is that these differences are philosophically based. Therefore, the objective of this lecture is to introduce a new set of philosophical constructs for your persual. Cross-cultural efforts in programme development for education, management, commerce, health care delivery systems and even political considerations have a greater clarity, when viewed from the perspective of these philosophical constructs.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECTS OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCE

ETHNIC GROUPS	AXIOLOGY	EPISTEMOLOGY	LOGIC	PROCESS
European Euro-American	Man - Object The highest value lies in the Object or in the acquisition of the Object.	Cognitive One knows through counting and measuring.	Dichotomous Either/or	Technology All sets are repeatable and reproduciable
African Afro-American	Man - Man The highest value lies in the interpersonal relationship between men.	Affective One knows through symbolic imagery and rhythm.	Diunital The union of opposites	Ntuology All sets are interrelated through human and spiritual networks.
Asian Asian-American	Man - Group The highest value lies in the cohesiveness of the group.	Conative One knows through striving toward the transcendence.	Nyaya The objective world is conceived independent of thought and mind.	Cosmology All sets are independently interrelated in the harmony of the universe.

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components. One means "danger" and the other "opportunity". The Oriental knows the meaning of crisis when he knows the merged meaning of danger and opportunity.

Nichols recognizes a caveat. We do not find these three (the Euro-American, Afro-American, and Asian-American) heritages in their pure form much of the time. Rather we see a mixture, an amalgam, of them. The continued struggle in the United States regarding the sale and purchase of property serves as an illustration. We acted as if we had two "rights" that were absolute, that could not be abrogated. I can sell or dispose of my property in any way I see fit. I can sell it to whomever I want to. I have that right through ownership. At the same time you have the right to purchase my property or any other piece of property, a right that cannot be denied you due to race, sex, age, creed, or national origin. These rights, to unfettered disposal of property and to equally unfettered ability to purchase property, cannot both be supreme. They cannot be absolute rights. They are inherently in conflict in any instance in which both of them are exercised.

These two property rights have different value building blocks at their base. Where the person-object relationship is the basis for the value system, having objects and having control over them is of the highest value. What I do with my objects (my property) is for me and me alone to determine. I will sell it when and to whom I please. Where the person-person relationship predominates respect for the dignity of the individual rules out discrimination on the basis of color, sex, age, etc. In that setting any buyer who can meet the "fair market price" must be permitted to make the purchase. To deny that right becuse a person is Black, female, old, etc., is a diminution of the person-person relationship. There was a time (not too long ago) in which the person-object relationship was so dominant in the United States that blatant housing discrimination predominated. It still does in some places. The civil rights movement has a value structure that is based on the person-person value building block. As it has taken hold, as people have learned to accept

and get along with others who may look, think, and act differently, the opportunity to live in any particular place has become more open.

This illustration suggests potency of the person-object, person-person, and person-universe building blocks in shaping our value systems. It also suggests their potency in shaping our epistemology and our problem-solving logic. This is not an assertion that one of these building blocks is inherently more right or wrong. Rather, it is a recognition that if one of them predominates, the value system, the epistemology, and the problem-solving logic used will be more limited and focused. That is, if the person-object relationship prevails, the value system will display great emphasis, almost universal emphasis on having and obtaining objects. The life-good-to-live will be defined by the objects to be obtained. The person who has more objects, more money, more education, more votes, etc., will be more important than those with less. And in such a culture, knowing becomes more cognitive, more restricted to our ability to develop discrete categories for our objects and our ability to objectively count and measure the items in those categories. How we feel about those objects and how we feel about what the unrestrained effort to obtain objects does to people and the quality of their interactions recedes in importance. It also leads to actions that are potentially destructive to our environment. For example, to increase our crop yield we use chemicals that have led to chain reactions that are eliminating some animal species and poisoning our waterways. The more we revere objects and objectification, the less we can use the contributions to knowing that can come from feelings and transcendence.

If the person-person relationship prevails or if the person-universe relationship prevails, equally potent restrictions to the value system and our epistemology. If we move to the ultimate in person-person relationships, to the point where feelings are all that matter, we support a subjectivity that is extremely detrimental to knowing some aspects of

ourselves, our surroundings, and our experiences. There should be no mistake by the reader here. This is not a claim that one of these value building blocks is better or worse than the others. They are different. And as cultures maximize on one of them or on some combination, they (the building blocks) will shape the dominant value structure, how that culture knows and how its problems are solved. Evaluators work within value systems to help people know the relative worth or value of some set of options. An understanding of the potency of these value building blocks should give evaluators a better base on which to structure their evaluative efforts.

As indicated ealier, Nichols' presentation described three problem-solving logics that associate with the three different value building blocks. The person-object building block leads to and is supported by a dichotomous logic, an either/or. This logic system heavily involves categorization and the determination of qualities that describe and differentiate the categories. It looks at people as plusses and minuses and through pairs of polar adjectives describes the people who are on one side or the other. The plus side is for those who are intelligent, happy, effective, clean, white, beautiful, active, important, neat, normal, etc.; the minus side for the unintelligent, sad, ineffective, dirty, black, ugly, passive, unimportant, sloppy, abnormal, etc. The list of polar adjectives is long and if you are perceived by someone as a person who displays several of the qualities on one side you are likely to be accorded gratis all the rest of the qualities on that side. When the slogan, "Black is beautiful" was popularized a number of years ago, it created difficulties in the viscera of many whites. The discomfort seemed to be that white is uaually a plus quality and black is a minus. If you are going to move black from the minus to the plus side of the ledger, the dichotomous thinker had to put white on the minus side; if black is beautiful, then white is ugly?

The dichotomous logic can be seen in our program improvement efforts. Given dissatisfaction with what a program is

accomplishing, we often look for the opposite as a solution. In trying to make readers out of everybody, we've tried and compared a rote approach and a phonics approach. As John Downing quipped once, "On one side we have the look-and-say lunatics and on the other, the phonetics fanatics." When a problem arises we often enter into a debate over its cause. One person's analysis is that X is the cause. Another asserts that it is Y that is the culprit. In the debate we often sharpen our argument by focusing on the more extreme instances of X and Y. In so doing we lose track of the vast majority with the problem and construct solutions for either an extreme X or an extreme Y.

The logic associated with the person-person relationship as the basic value building block is, according to Nichols, a diunital logic; a union of opposites. The "Black is beautiful" slogan was to its originators an illustration. To them beauty was a quality of both blacks and whites which, if accepted, could contribute to improvement of race relationships. Nichols illustrates diunital logic with a story about O. J. Simpson, the former football great. O. J. is supposed to make presentations of plaques to the outstanding football coach of the east and to his counterpart from the west. To a dichotomous logic adherent, a problem exists. "Which plaque shall I present first?" If I make the presentation to one first and the other second, do I communicate that one or the other coach is really the best? The diunital logician seeks the union of opposites, to take the items in an either/or problem and to merge them. O. J. Simpson is reported to have presented the two plaques simultaneously, and deliberately giving Coach X the plaque for Coach Y and vice versa, and stating that the recognition for excellence would be realized when they shook hands and exchanged plaques.

There is marked difference in the either/or and the union of opposite logics. The former has a win-lose appearance or character. For teaching reading program A wins and program B loses! This is acceptable, it fits in a value system in which objectification predominates. We need not be concerned about the impact of losing on the part of people involved with the losing

side. In contrast, diunital logic has a bringing together quality, a concern for mixing and for the relationships among people involved in that mixing. Evaluators should realize immediate help from understanding diunital logic. Is the merger of some or all of the options focused on in an evaluation, a legitimate option? In evaluation focused on reading instruction (rote vs. phonics) approaches, is the merger of the two a legitimate option? In determining the path to take to meet over crowding in secondary schools should we choose building more schools or going into a year-around schooling calendar? Diunital logic would lead us directly to the question, "Is some combination of the two a legitimate option?"

The logic of problem solving associated with the person-group or person-universe relationship Nichols says is Nyana, the objective world is conceived independent of thought and mind. This is an eastern philosophy in which all sets are independently interrelated in the harmony of the universe. At this writing the author's familiarity with it is insufficient to characterize it further.

Evaluation is proposed as a problem-solving process. Writings about it have focused in recent decades on a single logic, the dichotomous logic associated with the person-object relationship value buidling block and the cognitive epistemology. Evaluators need to expand their thinking to other logics. Stake's writings on responsive evaluation may be seen as such a move. It suggests a concern for relationships and concerns of the people in the setting on which the evaluation focuses.

The role of value and valuing in evaluation is also constrained by the Man-Object, Man-Man, Man-Group value building blocks. They constrain the kinds of things that are valued, the nature and intensity of valuing, and the way in which we know that we know the value of something. Some will interpret the presentation of Nichols as a qualitative ordering of the value of different epistemologies. That does not seem to be the point. Rather the message is analogous to the reasoning behind the

structure of the government of the United States. A single form of government is prone to, and likely to, maintain errors of a particular sort. The checks and balance of a government that combines three forms is more likely to catch and correct errors. The same holds for epistemologies. The individual who adheres rigidly to a single epistemology limits what can be known and risks the repeated commission of error. Evaluators who understand the different bases for value systems and for the constraints of their epistemologies have a greater likelihood of contributing more consistently informed decisions.

Strategies for Valuing and Suggestions for Evaluation

The analysis and synthesis done for this paper suggest that there is more understanding of the evaluation process to be gained if we concentrate on the verb sense to value. How do we value? How do we reach value judgments? These questions seem to have considerable potential for guiding evaluative efforts. In contrast, the search for understanding of what values are or what it is that we value seems less productive for our understanding of evaluation as a general problem-solving process. At the same time we need to recognize that the question, "What is value and what are the things and qualities we value?" is an important consideration in any given evaluation effort. But, these things or qualities are only context specific. Something considered as a value in one setting may not be in another setting. That variability does not contribute to simplification and clarification of the evaluation process.

Summary

Value and valuing appear to be both central to the process of evaluation and problematic. Our literature demonstrates that our understanding of these constructs is far from complete, that they are used often in a way that specifies everything and nothing, and that we lack adequate methodologies for identifying the dimensions of value in the study of a specific set of options and

for delineating and selecting a valuing strategy. At the same time our literature contains work that can expand and specify meaning of the concepts of value, valuing, and value systems. And that literature exposes the role of these concepts in evaluation. Further, the literature gives us an expanded perception of the power of the building blocks of value in shaping our choice making and subsequently our institutions and our lives. The building blocks of value and value systems determine what we value, how we know what we value, and the logic and process for problem solving. The potency of that force is of sufficient magnitude and nature that the search for understanding is warranted and must be continued. It seems fitting that this discussion of value, valuing, and evaluation should terminate in what Gowin and Millman would call an Idealization Value Claim, our understanding of evaluation can be better.

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